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ABSTRACT

Efforts to desegregate the public schools in Berkeley, California began in 1957 when a committee was appointed to study the problems of desegregation. In 1963, the board voted to desegregate the junior high schools and to study methods for desegregating the elementary schools. The 1968 elementary desegregation plan was complex. To desegregate the elementary schools the district was divided into 4 zones, each zone containing a cross section of the community with approximately equal rations of students. The zoning was also designed to contain equal representations of socioeconomic groups. The elementary school desegregation plan did not call for busing merely on the basis of race. Distance from school and the grade level were also determining factors. The physical aspects of desegregation were implemented with relative ease. There were few complaints about racial violence in the schools during implementation. However, disruptions along racial lines have been a constant problem at the grade seven and eight school which had been predominantly white. Achievement scores have improved for minority as well as majority students; however, disparities continue to exist among the different racial and ethnic groups. The Berkeley school system hired a number of minorities, particularly for important administrative positions; however, minorities still remain underrepresented in the system's school staff. (Author/AM)

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SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

A STAFF REPORT OF
THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION
ON CIVIL RIGHTS

August 1977

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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PREFACE

The United States Commission on Civil Rights released on August 24, 1976, its report to the Nation: Fulfilling the Letter and Spirit of the Law: Desegregation of the Nation's Public Schools.

The report's findings and recommendations were based upon information gathered during a 10-month school desegregation project. This included four formal hearings (Boston, Massachusetts; Denver, Colorado; Louisville, Kentucky; and Tampa, Florida); four open meetings held by State Advisory Committees (Berkeley, California; Corpus Christi, Texas; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Stamford, Connecticut); a survey of nearly 1,300 local school districts; and 29 case studies of communities which had difficulties with desegregation, had moderate success with desegregation, or had substantial success with desegregation.

Subsequent to the report's release, considerable interest was generated concerning the specifics of the case study findings, which, owing to space limitations in the national report, were limited to a few brief paragraphs. In an effort to comply with public requests for more detailed information, Commission staff have prepared monographs for each of the case studies. These monographs were written from the extensive field notes already collected and supplemented, if needed, with further interviews in each community. They reflect, in detail, the original case study purpose of finding which local policies, practices, and programs in each community surveyed contributed to peaceful desegregation and which ones did not.

It is hoped that the following monograph will serve to further an understanding of the school desegregation process in this Nation.

CONTENTS

I. Background 1

II. Desegregation Efforts 4
The 1964 Plan
The 1968 Plan

III. Implementation 13

IV. The Effects of Desegregation 17
Physical Changes
Violence and Discipline
White Flight
Quality of Curriculum
Minority Hiring
Finances

V. Findings and Conclusions 26

Tables

1. Student Enrollment for Selected Years by Race and Ethnicity 2

2. Faculty Composition for Selected Years by Race and Ethnicity 10

I. BACKGROUND

Located within the metropolitan San Francisco Bay area of northern California, Berkeley has a population of 116,716. Approximately 62.5 percent of the city's population is white, 23 percent black, 9 percent Asian American, and 5.5 percent of Spanish surname.[1]

Berkeley is a university town. In April 1976 University of California at Berkeley reported 11,771 full- and part-time employees.[2] The total work force in Berkeley was reported as 62,098.[3] In addition to the university, 323 manufacturing plants provided employment for residents of Berkeley as well as the greater bay area.[4] However, with an enrollment of 29,344 students, the university is the center of Berkeley's culture and economy.[5]

In October 1975 the Berkeley Unified School District estimated its enrollment to be 45 percent white, 42 percent black, 7 percent Asian American, 3 percent Chicano, and 3 percent all other.[6] The ratio of minority-to-majority students has remained stable since elementary school desegregation was implemented in 1968.[7] Table 1 shows the student population for selected years since 1968.

TABLE 1

Student Enrollment for Selected Years

by Race and Ethnicity

Fall	Am. Ind.	Black	Asian Am.	Sp. Sur.	All Others	Total
1968	19	6917	1193	540	7535	16,204
1970	21	7115	1030	561	7181	15,908
1972	21	6778	941	456	7017	15,213
1974	15	6510	900	507	6968	14,900
1975	16	5476	850	406	6171	12,919

Source: Research and Evaluation Office, Berkeley Unified School District, January 1976.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the Population, Part 6, California, 1970. Percentages are derived from tables 6, 23, and 96. For this report, the term "white" does not include Spanish-surnamed persons.

2. Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, "Community Economic Profile" (April 1976, mimeographed) (hereafter cited as "Profile").

3. John Batelli, statistician, Employment Data and Research, Employment Development Department, San Francisco, Calif., telephone interview, Feb. 14, 1977.

4. "Profile."

5. Jane Picott, administrative assistant, Office of Institutional Research, University of California at Berkeley, telephone interview, Feb. 15, 1977. This figure represents enrollment as of Fall 1976.

6. Berkeley Unified School District, Report of the Student Racial Census (Fall 1975, mimeographed), p. 1.

7. California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, open meeting, Berkeley, Calif., Mar. 19-20, 1976, transcript, p. B-158.

II. DESEGREGATION EFFORTS

Efforts to desegregate Berkeley's public schools began in 1957 when the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter proposed to the school board that a citizens' advisory committee be appointed to study the problems of segregation in Berkeley schools.[1] Such a committee was appointed. It sponsored numerous meetings with school personnel and community representatives and submitted a study of educational opportunities in the district.[2]

In 1958 C.H. Wennerberg became superintendent of schools. By 1960 he and his staff had begun intergroup relations training for the district's teachers and administrators. Minority teachers were hired in increasing numbers and their placement was not restricted to predominantly minority schools. By 1963 school administrators included community participation in the district's intergroup relations efforts.[3]

The 1964 Plan

In 1963 the board voted to desegregate the junior high schools and to study methods for desegregating the elementary schools at a later date.[4] (There is only one high school, a 3-year school, in the district and consequently it was already desegregated.) During the open meeting conducted by the Commission's California Advisory Committee in the spring of 1976, Judge Spurgeon Avakian, a former board member of the Berkeley school district, said of the board's decisions:

> First of all was the conviction of the board that in our modern society, equal rights and equal opportunities are meaningless without equal education. Secondly, there was the belief that equal education is impossible in a segregated setting. And finally, there was a feeling on the part of the board that the community of Berkeley was ready to take a

> major step in trying to reduce some of the inequities which were prevalent in our society.[5]

As the board was considering the question of educational opportunities, the political climate in Berkeley was shifting from conservative to liberal. Board membership reflected this change. In 1958 the board had one liberal and four conservatives; by 1963 the board was the exact opposite: one conservative and four liberals, including the first black member.[6]

According to Judge Avakian, opposition to desegregation from all strata of the community took the form of attempts to delay desegregation. This opposition organized a recall election in 1963 for members of the board who supported desegregation. Three members had resigned for reasons unrelated to desegregation, so only two members were on the board at the time. The attempt to have the board members recalled failed. While the recall election divided the community, Judge Avakian viewed the outcome as positive:

> ...[The outcome of the election] resulted in an overwhelming expression by the community of support for what had been done. The vote was something like 62 percent [against recall] to 38 percent [for recall]. And it meant that all of the people who were saying that this was a misguided decision...had to accept the decision of the community....It enabled the school system then to deal directly with the problems of implementing that decision without constantly having to deal with critics who were harping that this was not the will of the community.

Following the failure of the recall election, the board adopted a policy in 1964 to eventually desegregate all of the schools. The success of the two remaining board members in defeating the recall election provided, it seemed to them, a community mandate to proceed. The board appointed three new members to fill existing vacancies; a major criterion for appointment was support for school desegregation.[7]

As desegregation approached, the business community was predominantly conservative and supportive of the Parent Association for Neighborhood Schools (PANS), an antidesegregation group.[8] The University of California, Berkeley's largest employer, took no official or formal stand on the district's position. Individuals within the university community--experts in sociology, psychology, education--worked with the district in various capacities but on an ad hoc basis.[9] The Council of Churches issued a statement supporting desegregation.[10]

During the early stages of desegregation, the district operated a center to control rumors. Dr. Ramona Maples, a district administrator, said:

> ...[The] rumor clinic was to function for the community, to trace down every rumor that had to do with fears of desegregation...[T]his rumor clinic was a catalyst to sort out the fears that had been openly expressed at many of the hearings that we had prior to adoption of the plan.

Also in 1964, Superintendent Wennerberg retired, and the board conducted a nationwide search for a superintendent who would develop and implement a plan that would complete desegregation by including the elementary schools. Dr. Neil Sullivan joined the Berkeley school system in the summer of 1964. He had a national reputation in support of school desegregation and by many accounts was a dynamic, charismatic leader fully committed to school desegregation.[11]

Board and community representatives alike said that the strong leadership exerted by several superintendents and the school board, plus community participation, were critical elements in the successful implementation of the 1964 desegregation plan.

Under Dr. Sullivan's direction--and often his direct involvement--a number of committees were established after 1964 to explore other plans, devise budgets, solicit diverse community perceptions, and work with parents and students. Plan suggestions were solicited through the media and at numerous board and committee meetings.[12]

The 1968 Plan

In 1967 several groups including parent groups, teacher associations, and the NAACP again met with the board to ask that the elementary schools be desegregated immediately. They claimed that the district was stalling.[13] Dr. Sullivan refused, stating that his commitment to desegregation was total, but that no plan would be implemented without complete planning. The school board voted to desegregate as soon as possible but no later than September 1968. After reviewing more than 300 proposals, a district committee called the Summer Staff Task Group submitted a report entitled "Integration of the Berkeley Elementary Schools: A Report to the Superintendent."[14]

In October 1967 the board adopted a plan, based primarily on the task group report, and requested some further clarifications from the staff on how much it would cost and how it would affect education in Berkeley generally. In January 1968, before a community group of more than 2,000 persons, the board adopted the final plan that was to be implemented in September 1968.[15]

With the adoption of the plan, the board and the superintendent announced that anyone on the staff who was not supportive of desegregation should leave the district. Few resigned.[16]

From January to September 1968, Dr. Sullivan and the district's staff continued to have numerous planning meetings and informational meetings with all facets of the community to ensure a smooth transition to complete desegregation. A series of workshops and seminars to familiarize teachers and students with all elements of desegregation allowed discussion of fears or problems. The school administration also required teachers to take a series of courses in human relations and multicultural education for which they received credits toward eventual pay raises.[17]

The superintendent also created a student task force which met with him on a regular basis to discuss the expectations, fears, and differences between cultural groups. These students became advocates for desegregation in their respective schools.[18]

Simultaneously with the adoption of the 1968 desegregation plan, the board adopted an affirmative action policy to "work as fast as possible to bring the number of minority teachers more in line with the number of minority students in the school district." Carol Sibley, a former board president, described the recruitment efforts:

> ...[W]e instructed him [the personnel director] to go out and search for minority teachers all across the country....[H]e went on tour throughout the U.S. to try to find qualified teachers and workers in the clerical area who could be brought to Berkeley and interviewed for jobs because we felt we had to be aggressive about this.

The Berkeley recruitment drive concentrated on predominantly black universities and colleges. Community and staff task forces served in an advisory capacity. Although the school system has not reached its goal, progress has been made. In 1968 blacks constituted 17 percent of the faculty, Asian Americans 4 percent, and Spanish surnamed 2 percent; in 1975 the percentages had increased to 27 percent, 7 percent, and 4 percent, respectively. The system hired a black superintendent in 1974, and two of its three assistant superintendents are black. The student population in 1968 and in 1975 was approximately 42 percent black, 7 percent Asian American, and 3 percent Spanish surnamed.[19]

Table 2 shows the faculty composition for selected years since 1968. (The Berkeley school system in the spring of 1976 was in the ironic situation of anticipating a layoff of approximately 120 teachers; 80 percent would be minority teachers because they lack seniority.[20])

Since the recall election, the Berkeley community has generally had positive attitudes toward the desegregation effort. Dr. Arthur Jensen of the University of California School of Education was asked by the board to do an attitudinal study of parents and teachers in the spring of 1968 prior to the implementation of the plan. While he found some attitudinal differences among the various groups, most

groups were supportive of desegregation efforts. Busing itself did not rate as well, but there were no major objections to it.[21]

According to the Jensen survey, a majority of the teachers were supportive. The unions publicly announced support at the time of the adoption of the plan.[22] Difficulties were noted by the school administration, particularly in one of the grade seven and eight schools. Older teachers there apparently resented desegregation, fearing that there would be a loss of "quality" in their "prestige" school. Generally, Dr. Jensen found that older teachers had more reservations about school desegregation than younger ones.[23]

Throughout desegregation the State and the Federal Government kept hands-off positions. They accepted the district's compliance with civil rights laws at face value, and they neither requested nor were asked to assist in the planning.[24]

Although the media were generally supportive of the leadership, there were some that were critical. For example, the conservative Berkeley Gazette criticized the 1968 effort, claiming its readership was 80 percent antidesegregation and questioning the educational value of busing children.[25]

Asked what she considered the single most important factor in desegregation in Berkeley, Carol Sibley said, "I think it was the total community involvement under the leadership of both the board and the superintendent."

TABLE 2

Faculty Composition for Selected Years

by Race and Ethnicity

Fall	Am. Ind.	Black	Asian Am.	Sp. Sur.	All Others	Total
1968	2	178	47	28	785	1040
1970	3	263	51	27	770	1114
1972	4	323	89	40	725	1181
1974	2	303	73	36	682	1096
1975	2	288	81	42	623	1036

Source: Research and Evaluation Office, Berkeley Unified School District, January 1976.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, open meeting, Berkeley, Calif., Mar. 19-20, 1976, transcript, p. A-13 (hereafter cited as Berkeley transcript).

2. Ibid., pp. A-13-15.

3. Kathryne Favors, Before the Bus Ride (Oakland, Calif.: Jonka Enterprises, 1970), pp. 40-84.

4. Carol Sibley, Never a Dull Moment (Berkeley, Calif.: Documentation and Evaluation of Experimental Projects in Schools, 1972), p. 50 (hereafter cited as Never a Dull Moment).

5. Berkeley transcript, p. A-8. Unless noted otherwise, all direct quotes in this monograph are from the transcript.

6. Marc Monheimer, board member, Berkeley United School District, interview, February 1976. Staff members of that Commission's Western Regional Office in Los Angeles, Calif., interviewed educators, school officials, civic leaders, and parents in Berkeley during February and March 1976.

7. Never a Dull Moment.

8. Carol Sibley, former board president, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February 1976.

9. Jack Shuster, assistant to the chancellor, University of California, interview, February 1976.

10. Never a Dull Moment.

11. Ibid.

12. Dr. Neil Sullivan, former superintendent of schools, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, January 1976 (hereafter cited as Sullivan interview).

13. Ibid.

14. Berkeley Unified School District, "Integration of the Berkeley Elementary Schools: A Report to the Superintendent" (September 1967, mimeographed).

15. Never a Dull Moment.

16. Carl Mack, former chairperson, Education Committee, Berkeley National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, interview, March 1976.

17. Sullivan interview.

18. Berkeley transcript, p. A-89.

19. Dr. Laval Wilson, superintendent of schools, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, March 1976.

20. Ibid.

21. Dr. Arthur R. Jensen, "Parent and Teacher Attitudes Toward Integration and Busing," (n.d., mimeographed), p. 5 (hereafter cited as "Parent and Teacher Attitudes").

22. Never a Dull Moment.

23. "Parent and Teacher Attitudes."

24. Charles Love, equal opportunity specialist, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Region IX, interview, March 1976.

25. Terry Sellards, editor, Berkeley Gazette, interview, March 1976.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

Desegregation was implemented in several phases. Because there is only one high school in the district, it was already desegregated. In 1964 the three junior high schools were desegregated. This involved converting one junior high school--which had been predominantly minority--into a ninth grade "West Campus" related to the 3-year high school. Both of the remaining junior high schools were converted into schools for grades seven and eight. The zones for these two schools divided the city in halves, each half containing approximately equal proportions of students from different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.[1]

The 1968 elementary (K-6) desegregation plan was more complex. Prior to desegregation in 1968, the district had 14 elementary schools. Four of these were located in the west and south (or "flatlands"), which have lower socioeconomic and predominantly minority populations. Six were located in the east (or "hills"), a higher income area predominantly white. Finally, between these two areas were four schools that served a cross section of the community and were already somewhat desegregated.[2]

In 1967 districtwide student populations were as follows: 40 percent black, 51 percent white (including Spanish surnamed), and 9 percent Asian American. The racial proportions in the six hills schools ranged from 73 to 91 percent white. In the four desegregated middle-area schools, black student population ranged from 21 to 42 percent of the total student population, and in the four flatlands Berkeley schools, the percentages of blacks ranged from 65 to 89 percent.[3]

To desegregate the elementary schools in 1968, the district was divided into four zones, each zone containing a cross section of the community with approximately equal ratios of students from the

flatlands, the middle area, and the hills. The zoning was also designed to contain equal representations of socioeconomic groups. To allow for flexibility in dealing with individual problems, a 10 percent variance in racial percentage at each school (5 percent fewer or greater than the ratio of the district as a whole) was arbitrarily established. The desegregation plan affected white and black alike. Asian American and Mexican American children were not treated specially in the early days of the planning.[4]

Within each zone, one of the four flatland schools was designated as a fourth to sixth grade school. Two or more of the middle-area and hills schools were designated as schools for kindergarten to third grade (K-3). In effect, students residing in the flatlands would walk or be transported to hills or middle-area schools for grades K-3, and students residing in the remainder of the district would walk or be transported to flatland schools for grades 4-6.

The elementary school desegregation plan did not call for busing merely on the basis of race. Distance from school and the grade level were also determining factors.[5] The plan called for approximately 3,500 of 9,000 elementary students to be bused. Walk zones were established with less than 3/4 of a mile for K-3 students and less than 1 mile for students in grades 4-6. State transportation allocations provide partial reimbursement to districts using these distances as a criterion.[6]

The desegregation plan has not been altered since 1968.[7] Prior to the 1968 desegregation of the elementary schools only 250 students were bused by the district. (Between 1964 and 1968 the district had sponsored some voluntary elementary school desegregation--one-way busing of blacks into hills elementary schools--funded by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.) Since 1968 approximately 3,000 to 3,500 students have been bused--the number remaining relatively constant in proportion to the total student population.[8] (Like many school districts throughout the country, the average daily attendance in Berkeley has dropped significantly in the last 5 years.)

There has been resentment from the start that black youngsters carry the burden of busing because they must be bused at a younger age.[9] The "equitable" part of the plan is that every child is bused during some part of his or her school career.

In addition to busing during the regular school hours, buses were also made available for after-school activities.[10] School administrators and parents monitored the bus rides closely the first years and assured themselves that safety and convenience prevailed. "Really and truly," Carol Sibley, former president of the Berkeley School Board, told the California Advisory Committee, "busing has not been much of an issue in Berkeley since we began it. We had very few complaints."

No child has a choice of schools under the plan. However, it should be noted that several years after the 1968 desegregation the district instituted a number of "alternative" schools, enrollment at which was voluntary. The district maintained that each alternative school must reflect the racial and socioeconomic makeup of the community as a whole. While this policy was followed to some degree, the philosophy and function of some of the alternatives made them more appealing to some racial and ethnic groups than to others. For example, Black House, an alternative school focusing on black culture, tended to appeal primarily to black students.[11]

For the first year of desegregation, faculty members were asked for preferences in school placement. There were few major shifts of majority or minority teachers despite the shifts of grades within schools.[12] During the 1974-75 school year, the K-3 schools were the least balanced in terms of faculty placement. Of the 12 schools serving K-3 and early childhood, 8 of them had 65 percent or more white staff. The other schools in the district (except the high school with a 30 percent minority, 70 percent majority staff) had a ratio of 50 percent minority and 50 percent white staff.[13]

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Carol Sibley, Never a Dull Moment (Berkeley, Calif.: Documentation and Evaluation of Experimental Projects in Schools, 1972) (hereafter cited as Never a Dull Moment).

2. Kathryne Favors, "Before the Bus Ride" (Oakland, Calif.: Jonka Enterprises, 1970), p. 57.

3. Ibid.

4. Dr. Arthur Dambacher, director, research and evaluation, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February 1976.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Frank Brown, chairman, Berkeley National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, interview, April 1976.

10. Never a Dull Moment.

11. Marvin Gantz, Office of Research and Evaluation, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February 1976.

12. Dr. Neil Sullivan, former superintendent of schools, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, January 1976.

13. Berkeley Unified School District, "Affirmative Action Program, 1975-1976, revised" (Dec. 5, 1975, mimeographed), pp. 20-24.

IV. THE EFFECTS OF DESEGREGATION

Physical Changes

According to school administrators, the physical aspects of desegregation were implemented with relative ease. Buses were on schedule, students met in heterogeneous classes (at the elementary school levels), parents socialized across racial lines, and teachers did not resign en masse.

Physical improvements were made at some of the schools. A black parent testified that a group of parents had fought for years for remodeling of the cafeteria and lighting in the basement of the black school in her neighborhood, but was ignored until the school was desegregated.[1]

Violence and Discipline

There were few complaints about racial violence in Berkeley schools during implementation of desegregation. The number of racial incidents was minimal and very few could be traced to desegregation.[2] Alan Young, a school counselor, testified that behavior that would normally be considered merely aggressive or even playful if it occurred between two students of the same race was interpreted by overreacting white parents as a racial incident if students of different races were involved.[3] The California Advisory Committee heard testimony that since desegregation there has been minimal physical disruption in Berkeley's public schools.[4]

However, disruptions along racial lines have been a constant problem at the grade seven and eight school which had been predominantly white. Extortion and intimidation have reportedly occurred in grades 4 to 12 but administrators report that this practice has subsided considerably in the last 3 years. Secondary school students, parents, and principals told

Commission staff that there is very little interracial fighting on the secondary school campuses; rather, each racial or ethnic group tends to respect the others and stay unto itself.[5]

Commission staff was told on numerous occasions that some white teachers tend to handle discipline along racial lines. Either white teachers are intimidated or hesitant to discipline black students, or because their expectations are different for black students, they tend to be more lenient in their demands on them.[6]

Dr. Ramona Maples, associate director of research for the school district, offered this explanation: "Black children still do not know how to beat the system. They do not know the appropriate way to get through the system without getting punished." Dr. Maples said that more black male children are disciplined than any other group.[7]

White Flight

The district has no figures to show the extent of white flight. When whites left the district, they were replaced by other white families who wanted to move into the district. Therefore, the overall loss of whites was negligible.

There has been some loss in the black student population. Berkeley has one of the highest tax rates for education in the State.[8] While many of the black families in Berkeley are long-time residents, the city is too expensive for low-income or blue-collar workers--black or white. With attrition, the percentage of black students in the district has been dropping slightly for the past 3 years.[9]

Quality of Curriculum

Achievement scores of both majority and minority students improved after desegregation. The director of research and evaluation, Dr. Arthur Dambacher, testified that achievement test scores of students within the different racial and ethnic groups had improved. He also cited factors other than achievement

scores that suggest positive results from desegregation in Berkeley:

> If we were to take a look at desegregation, the physical redistribution of youngsters...I feel that Berkeley gets a near perfect score....If we're saying that white middle-class values and behavior patterns have been accepted by all of the minority groups...then we did not accomplish that because in my opinion it was not the objective that Berkeley set out to accomplish. If we instead mean by [integration] a greater awareness of the multicultural nature of our community, then yes, we've got a good score on that.

Throughout the desegregation process in Berkeley, efforts have been made to build multicultural activities into the curriculum. These efforts have had mixed success. For example, board policy mandates black studies for all fifth-grade classes; there is some question as to the extent to which this policy is carried out.[10] Ethnic studies in the higher grades tend to service only the group in question.

There are two major bilingual programs--one for students of Spanish-speaking background and one for Asian Americans.[11] While not directly related to the district's desegregation efforts, they are reflective of the school board's commitment to provide equal educational opportunity. One board member explained to the Advisory Committee:

> I think that every school district in the country [with] non-English-speaking students has to establish some sort of bilingual program that will allow those students not to fall behind simply because of the lack of mastery of the language....Simply desegregating wasn't enough, [the language minority students] needed an opportunity in a bilingual-bicultural setting, not only allowing [them]...to appreciate and accept their culture and their way of life, but allowing others to...gain a respect for that kind of situation....

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the district experimented with segregated schools within the desegregated system. Two of the most prominent of these schools were Black House and Casa de la Raza. The former served mainly blacks of high school age who had dropped out or were potential dropouts. The latter served about 125 students with Spanish-speaking backgrounds in grades K-12. Several community complaints about the segregated nature of these schools led to Office for Civil Rights action against segregation in these alternative programs. The schools were ostensibly closed although remnants of the programs remain.[12]

Although desegregation has been generally successful, complaints surfaced at the open meeting. Some black and some white parents expressed concern that disparities continued to exist among the achievement levels of the different racial and ethnic groups.[13] Some minority parents criticized the placement of minorities in low tracks; others complained that white teachers had low expectations of the capabilities of minority students.[14] Jesse Anthony, a music teacher in the district who is also active in the black community, said some classes are segregated:

> ...in music...you probably will find very few black students, and it's not because they are not terribly talented. It is because they are wiped out by the method of teaching, by the curriculum.

Judy Bingham, a white parent, indicated that the school administration has not responded to student needs:

> I have never been of the belief that there was any reason why black students should not be given the sense that they must achieve, and I feel that the district has failed them in this regard. They failed the nonminority students as well because achievement has not been made a very big issue.

Minority Hiring

Berkeley has hired minorities at administrative and staff levels within the school system. According to Gene Roh, president of the board of education: "[You] have to have minority representation from...one end of the district to the other, relative to classroom teachers, counselors, support service people and administrators...through members of the board."

Dr. Laval Wilson, superintendent of Berkeley Unified School District, articulated the importance of minority hiring:

> ...the affirmative action aspect of any school district that is desegregated is very crucial because you need to have a variety of ethnic adult models [for] a variety of students....Over a period of time we have found in our district...the percentages of minority staff members, certificated and classified, have proportionately increased....

Along with hiring and placement of minority teachers, efforts were made in the early stages of desegregation to encourage interaction. One teacher told the Advisory Committee:

> [W]e [teachers] had meetings at least once a week where we sat around and tried to deal with each other and...work out problems that we were having...dealing with a multiethnic culture...[I]t was helpful to everyone...

Program and funding cuts within the past several years have minimized this kind of activity.[15]

Finances

Before desegregation, the district spent .006 percent of its total budget on busing. After desegregation the district spent approximately 2 percent. The original estimate of the cost of reorganizing the elementary schools of Berkeley was $518,138 for the 1968-69 fiscal year. This figure declined to $202,000 for the 1969-70 fiscal year and

rose to $414,287 for 1970-71. Included in the totals are the estimated costs of transportation, additional classrooms, special facilities for the intermediate school (4-6), and material and equipment relocation. The cost of items specifically related to desegregation activities is judged to be less than 2.5 percent of the total operating cost of the schools during the year. Much of this expense is absorbed by the State.[16]

In 1968 Dr. Sullivan resigned and the board hired Dr. Richard Foster. Dr. Foster was particularly interested in innovative educational methods, and he was extremely capable in bringing resources into the district. In 1971 the district received a Federal grant totaling $6 million for 5 years to develop experimental schools. Other Federal money poured into the district, from such programs as Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); Title III, ESEA; and Emergency School Assistance Act (ESAA).[17] In 1972 Federal money totaled 14.1 percent of the district's budget, where it had been only 5.6 percent the preceding year. The Rockefeller and the Ford Foundations also made grants to the district.[18]

For the past 3 years the district has received approximately $750,000 in ESAA funds (Federal money specifically earmarked to facilitate desegregation). This money is mainly used in two schools (plus one parochial school) in an effort to close the achievement gap between blacks and whites. The ESAA grant does not directly affect the busing plan.[19]

Because Berkeley prides itself on using the latest teaching methods and because of its dominant liberalism, the community has taxed itself heavily for its schools. In 1967-68 the district was expending $1,012.99 per child. By 1974-75 that figure had doubled to $2,215.10, and the district had a total budget of $29,323,564. In 1973 the district was expending $2,162.71 per pupil; the State average for unified districts that year was $1,145.10.[20]

Because Berkeley was modifying its educational program in so many ways at the same time that it was desegregating, it is difficult to separate out the costs specifically for desegregation. However, one issue related to the financial situation bears close

scrutiny in the coming months: The experimental schools program terminates this year and certain equalizing amendments to SB 90 (the State's aid to disadvantaged students program) means enormous losses of revenues for the district. In addition, like many urban districts, Berkeley is experiencing a significant drop in the average daily attendance, with resultant loss in State subsidies. While it is clear that the board has no intention of dismantling the busing plan, other critical aspects of the desegregation process may suffer. Minority teachers may be laid off and programs specifically geared at multicultural education and bilingual education may be dismantled. Teacher aides may be laid off, which will make it more difficult for teachers to effectively work with heterogeneous classes.[21]

Regardless of these possibilities, no one interviewed by Commission staff suggested that the district would ever return to a predesegregation status.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, open meeting, Berkeley, Calif., Mar. 19-20, 1976, transcript, pp. B-106-07 (hereafter cited as Berkeley transcript).

2. Berkeley transcript, p. B-85.

3. Ibid., pp. B-79-80.

4. Ibid., pp. A-123-24, B-111, B-124-25.

5. Tom Parker, principal, Berkeley High School, and Bea Fierra, principal, Martin Luther King School, interview, March 1976.

6. Donna McKinney and Amanda Williams, parents, interview, February 1976.

7. Berkeley transcript, p. A-99.

8. Louise Stoll, board member, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, March 1976.

9. Dr. Arthur Dambacher, director, research and evaluation, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February 1976 (hereafter cited as Dambacher interview).

10. Kathryne Favors, Intergroup Education Office, and Richard Navies, Black Studies, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February and March 1976.

11. Astor Mizuhara, principal, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, March 1976.

12. Charles Love, equal opportunity specialist, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Region IX, interview, March 1976.

13. Berkeley transcript, p. B-182.

14. Ibid., pp. A-172-73.

15. Gene Roh, president, school board, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, February 1976.

16. See Robert D. Frelow, "The Berkeley Plan for Desegregation" (May 1969, mimeographed); and Berkeley Unified School District, "Statistical Summary XIII, 1971-1972," and "Statistical Summary XIV, 1972-1973."

17. Dambacher interview.

18. Berkeley Unified School District, "Statistical Summary XIII, 1971-1972" and "Statistical Summary XIV, 1972-1973."

19. Berkeley Unified School District, "Emergency School Aid Proposal" (Jan. 30, 1976, mimeographed).

20. Dambacher interview, February 1976; California State Department of Education, Bureau of School Apportionments, "California Public Schools Selected Statistics, 1973-1974."

21. Dr. Laval Wilson, superintendent, Berkeley Unified School District, interview, March 1976.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Strong leadership exerted successively by several superintendents and the school board, plus community participation, were critical elements in the peaceful implementation of the desegregation plans of 1964 and 1968.

- Achievement scores have improved for minority as well as majority students; however, disparities continue to exist among the different racial and ethnic groups.

- The Berkeley school system hired a number of minorities, particularly for important administrative positions; however, minorities still remain underrepresented in the system's school staff.

Although not without problems, Berkeley's experience with desegregation is a positive one. Judge Avakian said:

> Berkeley...[went through]...the kind of thing every community is going to have to go through some time. And hopefully, some communities will learn from the Berkeley experience that it's not as traumatic as the critics proclaim it to be.

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